

Appl. No. 10/686,546
Amdt. dated March 24, 2006
Reply to Office Action of September 21, 2005

PATENT

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A tool for opening a cable having a length of filament disposed within a sheath, the tool comprising:
a proximal portion having a first flange connected with a shaft extending from the flange and adapted for engagement with a powered mechanical rotation device; and
a distal portion having a second flange; and
a column coupled with one of the proximal and distal portions, the column mechanically and detachably engaged with the other of the proximal and distal portions and including a cavity adapted to grip the filament and disposed such that the cavity is between the first and second flanges when the column is engaged with the other of the proximal and distal portions.
2. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein the column is fixedly coupled with the one of the proximal and distal portions.
3. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein:
the column comprises a hollow interior; and
the cavity comprises a hole extending through a surface of the column to the hollow interior.
4. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein cavity comprises a plurality of cavities, each such cavity being adapted to grip the filament.

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5. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein the powered mechanical rotation device is a hand-held drill.

6. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein:
the first flange comprises a threaded hole; and
the column is threaded at a proximal end for threading into the threaded hole,
whereby the column is detachably engaged with the proximal portion and coupled
with the distal portion.

7. (Original) The tool recited in claim 1 wherein:
the second flange comprises a threaded hole; and
the column is threaded at a distal end for threading into the threaded hole,
whereby the column is detachably engaged with the distal portion and coupled
with the proximal portion.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method for opening a cable having a length of
filament disposed within a sheath, the method comprising:
attaching an end of the filament to a tool having a column ~~disposed between two~~
flanges coupled with a proximal flange and a distal flange, the column mechanically and
detachably engaged with one of the flanges and including a cavity adapted to grip the filament;
thereafter, rotating the ~~column~~ proximal flange to pull the filament from the
sheath and to spool the filament about the column; and
thereafter, separating one of the flanges from the column to release the spooled
filament.

10. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein rotating the column
comprises rotating the column with a powered mechanical rotation device engaged with the tool.

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11. (Original) The method recited in claim 10 wherein the powered mechanical rotation device is a hand-held drill.

12. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein:
the tool further has a shaft extending from a first of the flanges; and
rotating the column comprises rotating the shaft with a powered mechanical rotating device engaged with the shaft.

13. (Original) The method recited in claim 12 wherein separating one of the flanges from the column comprises separating the first of the flanges from the column.

14. (Original) The method recited in claim 12 wherein separating one of the flanges from the column comprises separating a second of the flanges from the column.

15. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein:
the one of the flanges comprises a threaded hole into which a threaded end of the column is screwed; and
separating the one of the flanges from the column comprises unscrewing the column relative to the one of the flanges.

16. (Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein the filament comprises a strength member of an optical-fiber cable.

17 - 20. (Canceled)

21. (New) A tool for opening a cable having a length of filament disposed within a sheath, the tool comprising:
a powered mechanical rotation device comprising a chuck;

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a proximal portion having a first flange connected with a shaft extending from the flange and engaged with the powered mechanical rotation device, wherein the first flange comprises a threaded hole and the shaft comprises a flat surface configured to be inserted and secured into the chuck;

a distal portion having a second flange comprising a hex cap configured to be turned with a wrench; and

a column coupled with the distal portion and fixedly coupled with the hex cap, wherein the column is threaded at a proximal end for threading into the threaded hole, the column mechanically and detachably engaged with the proximal portion and including a cavity adapted to grip the filament and disposed such that the cavity is between the first and second flanges when the column is engaged with the proximal portion.